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THE  
BELFAST MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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[Vol. 1.

COMMUNICATIONS, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

*To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.*

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH, in the preface to his daughter's excellent "Popular Tales," calculates upon the authority of Burke, that there are eighty thousand readers in Great Britain, nearly one hundredth part of its inhabitants. He then proceeds: out of these we may calculate that ten thousand are nobility, clergy, or gentlemen of the learned professions. Of seventy thousand readers, which remain, there are many who might be amused and instructed by books, which were not professedly adapted to the classes; that have been enumerated." If we apply the calculation to Ireland, though the number of readers does not bear nearly the same proportion to the population, yet it is hoped they are encreasing, and in particular, that the populous province of Ulster is, at least, not the most defective in cherishing a taste for the useful and substantial parts of literature. On them the Belfast Monthly Magazine must chiefly rely for support, and much of its contents should be adapted to the information and improvement of the middle classes of society. In your first setting out, I hope you will permit a friend to your work to offer a few remarks.

Subjects interesting to the bulk of readers should be treated with plainness and simplicity, and in a manner adapted rather to the comprehension of the classes not professedly literary, than with a view to please the fastidious critic.

In a Magazine something should be done to please all classes of readers. Dissertations on Lucretius and Ovid, will have some admirers. Let them be moderately gratified; but I say, on behalf of the public, give us also more substantial food. In your agricultural, commercial and other month-

ly reports, we anticipate a fund of information. Procure a stock of original unpublished tours, both foreign and domestic: your model, Phillips' Monthly Magazine is excellent in this respect, and let your pages be often filled with delineation of manners, both at home and abroad. Such sketches, when tolerably executed, please and interest all classes. Attend to the subject of education, it is now receiving some part of that attention, which it well deserves. Give us freely accounts of well conducted institutions for the education of the poorer classes, and be particular in requesting information from your correspondents, on this highly interesting subject.

While you are careful not to make your Magazine too learned or too splendid, do not let it, on the other hand, become too groveling. Rescue the name of a Magazine from the disgrace, into which it has deservedly sunk, in consequence of the manner in which Magazines in Ireland have hitherto, in general, been conducted. Be original, and study to elevate your work to a rank with the respectable periodical publications of London: you see I take the privilege of a friend, and am free in my remarks. Be fastidious in the selection of articles, which you admit into your detached anecdotes. It is soft and slippery ground, in which it is easy to sink. Be careful of the tales you insert; tales, like poetry, do not admit of mediocrity.

Your political retrospect is good and breathes the genuine spirit of liberty: do not be afraid of speaking out with plainness, though with temper; remember your promise in your prospectus "not to lull into apathy." The public prints give us soporific draughts in sufficient quantity; do you dare to fan the sacred flame of liberty, on which, notwithstanding the excesses

which have been committed under its name, the happiness and well-being of nations depey'd. The French Revolution has produced a species of *reaction* by forcing opinions into a contrary current, and in consequence many have discovered an apostacy from the mild and gentle precepts of genuine liberty. In politics we have many like Jack, in the Tale of a Tub, who are resolved to rush into extremes, and be as unlike the rogue Peter as they can. Let us hope for more tranquil times, and a return of the good old wholesome attachment to the principles of liberty, no longer flaming like a meteor, but diffusing its steady and equitable light over the nations.

"Fond impious man, think'st thou yon  
sanguine cloud,  
"Rais'd by thy breath, has quench'd the  
orb of day?  
"To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,  
"And warms the nations with redoubled  
ray." GRAY'S BARD.

You are right in declining to entangle yourselves in the rugged path of Theological controversy; there is a certain point in maintaining, or opposing opinions, beyond which it has been justly observed that all is dissonance and noise, but do not be too much afraid to admit free discussion into your work, on Theological, or other subjects, which may tend to promote the welfare of the country; under this head I would class temperate Essays on the subject of Tithes.

Let each party speak freely and modestly for themselves, and give them scope to do so, as long as they keep within the bounds of moderation and propriety. You are not the arbiters of opinions, but you are bound to keep the combatants who appear in your pages within the prescribed limits of gentleman-like and decorous language.

The French, under the old regime, boasted that they were in full possession of liberty, for they could write freely on any subject except religion and politics; if you interdict, indiscriminately, remarks on those subjects, there appears to me an abridgment of the liberty, of a *free press*. Truth is not afraid of discussion, for her brightness is more apparent, the more she is examined; while error, for obvious reasons, shrinks from enquiry. I hope

your Magazine will always be an asylum for liberal examination, in which persons holding various and opposite opinions, will be permitted to plead their cause, and so long as this continues to be the case, *and no longer*, I most heartily wish success to your undertaking.

C. K.

*Postscript*.....On some subjects it is presumed it may not be thought prudent to enter into a discussion; I think it should be established as a canon of criticism for the Belfast Monthly Magazine, that no article should be admitted unless a liberty will be granted for a reply. By this means only you can maintain a *free press* and preserve, uninjured, the rights of discussion. It would be ungenerous to publish arguments which delicacy or the temper of the times would prevent from being examined, and publicly canvassed. If such *privileged* opinions are true, they require no additional confirmation, if they are not, you lend your aid to continue the error without giving an opportunity for detection.

#### *For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

MR. EDITOR,

I BEG leave to suggest the following hint to your readers, relative to an improvement which I am apt to think might with little expense be resorted to, in removing the disadvantages which uniformly attend the wind-mill, as its force is usually applied.

The wind-mill under the present circumstances, can never be used with a proper effect in cases where uniformity of motion is necessary, and of course, the benefit resulting from the currents in our atmosphere are considerably curtailed. It would be, I believe, a vain task to undertake the regulation of the motions of a machine, whose impetus depends upon a moving power of irregular velocity; I propose therefore to apply the power of the wind-mill, not *immediately*, but as a means of procuring a *well regulated impetus*, which can be applied to any kind of machinery where regularity of motion is required. My plan is to apply the power of the wind-mill to raising water to a certain height, by connecting it with a *forcing pump*; this water should